

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JON KELSO

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 23, 2004

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the life and legacy of Jon Kelso of Prineville, Oregon. Jon bravely battled the Storm King Mountain Fire outside the town of Glenwood Springs, Colorado in 1994, but succumbed to the blaze along with thirteen fellow firefighters while working to protect the City. I personally served as a firefighter and understand the risks they face each and everyday. Witnessing the awful inferno that fateful July day, I know Jon and his comrades battled the fire with the utmost courage and valor. With the tenth anniversary of the Storm King Fire approaching, I believe it appropriate to recognize the sacrifice Jon and the Storm King Firefighters made on behalf of a grateful community, state and nation.

Born and raised in Prineville, Jon attended Crook County High School where he was very active in athletics as a member on the golf team, the manager of the football team, a swimming teacher, and a lifeguard. He received a degree in wildlife sciences from Oregon State University, and had completed his first year of studies to become a civil engineer. In 1985, he joined the Prineville Hotshots, an elite group of firefighters who specialize in wildland fire suppression. He was a smoke jumper and a squad boss for the sawyers, a skilled crew that cuts down trees to prevent the spread of fires. Recognizing Jon's excel-

lent academic record and leadership of his hotshot crew, the Bureau of Land Management Wildland Firefighter Academy named a Memorial Award after Jon that goes to the most outstanding firefighter of the class. He was a dedicated member of his crew, and received a great deal of satisfaction from helping others. Above all, he was devoted to his family and friends.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to rise before this body of Congress and this nation to pay tribute to the life and memory of Firefighter Jon Kelso. Jon personified the Hotshots credo of Safety, Teamwork, and Professionalism; putting himself in harms way for unfamiliar people and places. He made the ultimate sacrifice doing what he loved, and I, along with the Glenwood Springs community and the State of Colorado are eternally grateful to this brave young man.

A TRIBUTE IN HONOR OF 2004
LEGRAND SMITH OUTSTANDING
TEACHER AWARD WINNER
KATHY RIZOR OF BATTLE
CREEK, MICHIGAN

HON. NICK SMITH

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, education is the key to our Nation's future prosperity and security. The formidable responsibility of molding and inspiring young minds to the avenues of hope, opportunity and achieve-

ment partially rests in the hands of our teachers. Today, I would like to recognize a teacher from Battle Creek, Michigan that significantly influenced and motivated exceptional students in academics and leadership who were winners of the LeGrand Smith Scholarship.

Kathy Rizer teaches Advanced Biology at Harper Creek High School in Battle Creek. She is credited with instilling in students an enthusiasm for not only these subjects, but also for life. As one of her students, Renee Burdick said, "She encouraged me to excel in all aspects of my life ranging from academics to extracurricular activities. Not only did she facilitate the position of a great educator for me, but she served as a strong leader for my other classmates, Harper Creek and the greater Battle Creek community." The respect and gratitude of her students speak well of Kathy's ability to challenge young minds and encourage them to always put forth their best effort.

Kathy Rizer's extraordinary work as a teacher has challenged and inspired countless students to move beyond the teenage tendency of superficial study and encourage them to foster deeper thought and connections to the real world. Arguably, no profession is more important because of its daily influence upon the future leaders of our community and our country, and Kathy's impact on her students is certainly worthy of recognition.

On behalf of the Congress of the United States of America, I am proud to extend our highest praise to Kathy Rizer. We thank her for her continuing dedication to teaching and her willingness and ability to challenge and inspire students to strive for success.